

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 2 with the following replacement paragraph:

--The present invention is described hereafter and claimed below in multiple aspects. In one aspect, a method according to the present invention provides silicon oxide having many, if not all, of the desired properties noted above. That is, a highly conformal, low stress, non-cracking silicon oxide layer is obtained by a method in which a silicon precursor gas is decomposed or oxidized in a deposition chamber containing a substrate at a first temperature. The silicon precursor gas may be any gas containing silicon. Ready examples of a silicon precursor gas that may be used to good advantage include ~~tetraethoxysilane~~ tetraethoxysilane (TEOS), silane (SiH_4), dichlorosilane (DCS), diethylsilane (DES), and/or tetramethylcyclotetrasiloxane (TOMCATS). The deposition may be enhanced with plasma or ozone. Following deposition of the silicon oxide layer, the deposition chamber is heated to a second temperature higher than the first temperature to anneal the silicon oxide layer. Alternatively, the substrates are moved to a second chamber for annealing.--.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 20, line 1 with the following replacement paragraph:

--The use of multiple, relatively thinner oxide layers is further illustrated in FIGS. 6A, 6B, and FIG. 7A through 7F. FIGS. 6A and 6B illustrate the difficulty of properly forming an oxide layer over a trench structure 61 using only a single, relatively ~~thick~~ thin layer 60. While the surface of the underlying structure and the sidewalls of the trench structure are covered by oxide layer 60, a fill gap 64 is also formed between the sidewalls. This gap is sometimes called a "chimney" or a "keyhole." Stress associated with fill gap 64 is concentrated at point 62. Accordingly when oxide layer 60 is annealed, a crack 63 is formed form due to the additional stress caused by shrinkage of oxide layer 60.--.